1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
OI 17 Murngin OI 17

larger reciprocation. In the chapters on Murngin kinship and local organization it was seen that the foundations of these structures are built entirely on reciprocity, and that the whole civilization might be described as in dynamic equilibrium. 181

Magic and War

Another belief centered around killing as a cause for war is that the spirit of the dead man enters the body of the killer and gives him double strength and actually increases his body size. When a man kills another during a tribal or interclan feud, he returns home and does not eat cooked food but subsists only on cold edibles until the soul of the dead man approaches him. He can hear the dead man's soul coming because the shaft of the spear which hangs from the stone head within the man drags on the ground and hits against the trees and bushes as he walks. When the spirit is very near, the killer can hear sounds coming from the dead man's wound (in a night fight the attacker usually strikes the sleeper's gullet). 775

The killer, ordinarily a young man and very frightened, in his fear runs to the camp of the old men. An old man tells him that he should not be afraid, but return and take the spear with which he has killed the man, remove the spear head, and put the spear end of the shaft between his own big toe and the toe next to it. The other end of the shaft is placed against his left shoulder. The left foot and side of the killer are used if he is right-handed, and the right side is used if he is left-handed. This is done so that the dead man's soul will not be afraid of the hand that killed its body. 775 788

The soul then enters the socket where the spear head was, and pushes its way upward into the leg of the killer, and finally into the body. It walks like an ant. It finally enters the stomach and shuts it up. The man feels sick and his abdomen becomes feverish. The killer rubs his stomach and calls out the proper name of the man he has killed (not his totem name, but his profane name). This cures him and he becomes normal again, for the spirit leaves the stomach and enters his heart. When the spirit enters the heart it has the same effect as if the blood of the dead man had been given to the killer. It is as though the man, before he died, had given his life's blood (powers, physical and spiritual) to the man who was to kill him. 775

The slayer, grown larger and exceedingly strong, acquires all the life strength the dead man once possessed. When the slayer dreams, the soul tells him that he has food for him and gives directions where 775 787

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
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to go to find it. He says, "Down there by the river you will find many kangaroo," or, "In that old tree there is a large honeybees' nest," or, "Near that large sand bank you will harpoon a very large turtle and find many eggs on the beach."

The killer listens, and after a little time sneaks away from camp by himself and goes out in the bush, where he meets the soul of the dead man. The soul comes very close and lies down. The slayer is frightened and cries, "Who is that? Somebody is near me." When he draws near where the spirit of the dead man was he finds a kangaroo, or, if he has gone to the sea beach, he discovers a turtle. It is unusually small. He looks at it and understands the meaning of its being there in the place where he had heard the movements of the dead man's soul. He takes sweat from under his arm and rubs it on his right arm, if he is right-handed, and on his left, if he is left-handed. He picks up his spear and calls out the name of the dead man and spears the animal. The animal is immediately killed but becomes much larger while dying. The man attempts to lift it. He finds it impossible because it has grown so large. He leaves the kill and returns to camp to tell his friends. He says when he arrives, "I have just killed the soul of the dead man. Do not let anyone hear of this because he might get angry again." His more intimate friends and relatives go out with him to help skin the animal and prepare it for eating. When they cut it up they find fat everywhere, which is considered one of the greatest delicacies in the native larder. When they cook it, only very small pieces are placed on the fire at first. They are tasted with much care, and the meat always tastes unpleasant.

Then the whole animal is cooked and a feast made with the parts more appreciated by the natives. The remainder is carried back to the main camp. The old men of the camp look and see that it is an animal of enormous size. They gather around it and someone asks, "Where did you kill him?"

"Up there by the river."

The old men know that this is no ordinary kill because there is fat everywhere. After some little time one of the old men asks, "Did you see somebody's soul out there in the bush?"

"No," lies the young man.

The old men then taste the flesh of the animal, but it does not taste the same as it ordinarily does. It has a slightly different flavor, it is not like a natural kangaroo or turtle.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 Oll7 Muragin Oll7

them, the lower dark-coloured edge of the clouds before they discharge their rain. Panel *g* is occupied by the *jiritja* hawksbill turtle, *kunwarudji*.

On the reverse side, K, *a* refers to the open sea, and the row of small triangles below, small clouds resting upon it; *tinimbu*, the queen fish, is in panel *b*. The devil-ray, *mulara*, is at *c*, also surrounded by cloud symbols. At *d* are more cloud symbols, and at *e*, another engraving of *mulara*.

The engravings on the obverse side of the companion paddle, C, deal with the devil-ray, *mulara*, and the turtle, *kunwarudji*, and on the reverse side, D, with the turtle only. On C, *mulara*, the devil-ray, is in panel *g*, surrounded by the clouds which he creates when anyone goes near his home in Port Bradshaw. The transverse bands, *f*, *h* and *m*, are rough seas made by him at the same time as the clouds. Near the head of *mulara* is a queen fish, *tinimbu*. At *j* is the hawksbill turtle surrounded by rocks, and at *n* and *k* are thunder-clouds which have discharged their rain.

On the reverse side, D, the cross-hatched bands, *a*, *c* and *f*, represent the rough seas made by the turtle, *kunwarudji*, when he is disturbed because the aborigines have approached his home. The triangles on panel *b* are the clouds, *tarul*, caused by the water the turtle blows into the sky, and the two triangles, *e*, the wind that originates in those clouds. The hawksbill turtle is at *d*, the triangles on either side of him being rocks near his totemic place.

Whilst on a canoe journey with the aborigines, I noticed that one of their paddles was covered with engraved designs. At the completion of the journey the aborigines traded this paddle, Fig. 58.A, B, to me and explained the designs, all of them referring to the *jiritja* totemic creatures and natural features of Port Bradshaw.

Fig. 58.A, B shows the obverse and reverse sides of the paddle. In panel *a* of A is the devil-ray, *mulara*, two hawksbill turtles, *kunwarudji*, and two queen fish, *tinimbu*. At *b* is a thunder-cloud created by *mulara*, and along the sides and above *b*, in the form of triangles, a number of smaller clouds.

The reverse side, B, shows panel *c* occupied by another thunder-cloud with smaller clouds, triangles, along its sides. The triangles in panel *d* indicate open thunderstorms.

(b) CAPE ARNHEM

Mythical Human Beings

Barolo-barolo and his Wives at Cape Arnhem

A mythical *jiritja* man, *Barolo-barolo*, and his two wives, *Maimbuna* and *Warungil*, once lived at Kumbulbula, near Cape Arnhem. *Barolo-barolo* was an expert hunter of both the animals and the hives of wild bees. In the middle of a saline flat at the totem place of *Barolo-barolo* was a wooden penis. This was the penis of *Barolo-barolo*. Until recently, when anyone in the vicinity was going to search for the hives of wild bees, he first visited the wooden penis and, striking it with a branch, said:

31 Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 Oll7 Murngin Oll7

222 773* 788

'Make my eyesight keen so that I can see the flight of the bees.'

This ritual enabled the hunter to see the bees and to follow their flight more easily,[85] because of *Borolo-borolo's* ability to do so during mythical times. Even though, at the present time, the wooden penis is no longer in its totemic place, the aborigines still visit the same spot and repeat the formula, which they say still makes their eyesight much clearer.[86]

Borolo-borolo's wife, *Mainbuno*, was also expert in locating the wild yam, *jakwa*, and every place in which she once dug for them is known. Today, the women visit these places and, putting their digging sticks on the spot where *Mainbuno* had dug previously, say, 'Brr' in a low voice. After that, they find many *jakwa* yams.

773* 532*

Two paintings, a painted wooden penis and a bark figure (not published) illustrate the myth. .

On Pl. 110A is *Borolo-borolo* walking through the grass, with his hand shielding his eyes from the sun as he watches the flight of a wild bee towards its hive. On the left is an emu and a wallaby which ran away when they saw *Borolo-borolo*, and on the right the three yams, *jakwa*, which *Borolo-borolo's* wife, *Mainbuno*, had created. The tubers are at the top of the painting and their foliage is at the bottom.

Plate 110C is a duplicate of the wooden penis of *Borolo-borolo* which the aborigines made for me and on which they painted the design of the yam, *jakwa*.

Plate 110D[87] pictures *Borolo-borolo* with his two wives, *Mainbuno* and *Wurungil*.[88] *Borolo-borolo* is setting out to hunt kangaroos and emus and his wives to collect *jiritja* honey, the female, *barangit*, which burns the mouth, and the male, *kamo*, a pleasant-tasting honey. *Mainbuno* is in the upper position, and *Wurungil* in the lower. Below the family is a forest of stringy-bark trees (*Eucalyptus tetradonta*). The cross-hatched panels on the right represent the wild honey collected by the women, the three dark-coloured areas being *barangit* and the light-coloured ones *kamo*.

Spirit People

776 532* 775

Five bark paintings and an engraved paddle deal with the spirit people, the *Mokoi*, some of whom travel regularly from Nalkuna, the *jiritja* heaven, to their totemic place on the southern side of Cape Arnhem[89] so that they can spear dugongs, turtles and fish to provide the inhabitants of Nalkuna with food. Two others, the woman *Wulu-wulu* and the man *Kultana*, visit Port Bradshaw so

85. The method of locating the hives is to watch the direction of the flight of the bees, an exacting task, for the insects are little larger than the common house fly.

86. This is, to some degree, an increase centre. The penis of *Borolo-borolo* is also an example of the care that must be taken before attaching an erotic significance to any representation of the sex organ.

87. Interpretation by F. D. McCarthy.

88. Elkin and the Berndts (1950), p. 41, Pl. 5A, figure and describe a wooden trumpet or drone tube associated with *Borolo-borolo* and the yams.

89. Map, Fig. 57.

[text continues on p. 345]

532 131 The drawings in polychrome from north-
756 eastern Arnhem Land that accompany this paper[1] were made on sheets of stringy bark (*Eucalyptus tetrodonta*) by three medicinemen, called *marrngitmirri*, members of Mildjingi clan of the lower Glyde River, and of two neighbouring clans, Liagauwumirr' and Ngalladar
617 Tjambarpoingo. Mildjingi is a clan of *yiritja* moiety and Liagauwumirr' and Tjambarpoingo are members of the opposite moiety, *dua*, in which certain terminal vowels, notably *i* and *o* are elided as an arbitrary mark of distinction
[197] between clans of different moieties whose members speak similar languages. In Wanguri clan of the Arnhem Bay area the word *kulong* is applied to the medicineman.

776 In each case the figures drawn by the medicineman
787 represent the spirits called *marrngit*, two or more in number, which adopt certain men, often first subjecting
756 them to an ordeal or series of ordeals, after which they are known as *marrngitmirri*—medicinemen—and are vested with the special powers of this cult.

The *marrngit* or spirit familiars of two of the three medicinemen from eastern Arnhem Land who claimed to be *marrngitmirri* are shown in Plates I and Ja. These *marrngit* were said first to have visited the men whom they later adopted, subjecting them to a series of ordeals. Sometimes they brought sickness, in other cases, according to my informants, they inflicted injuries, sometimes actually breaking bones and almost killing the novice, after which they restored him and then invited the initiate in turn to try his own skill by injuring the *marrngit* and restoring him. After a more or less lengthy period of trial by way of initiation, the *marrngit* finally adopted the *marrngitmirri* and thenceforth helped and guided him in the practice of the cult.

756 According to most of my informants, the cult of the *marrngitmirri* or medicineman in eastern Arnhem Land is restricted to men only, although it is not a sacred cult and is not secret—that is, it does not depend upon ritual or supernatural backing, and is carried out in open camp without any secrecy, in the presence of women and children. Many of the *marrngit*, the spirit familiars themselves, were said by my informants to be females. Although
[776] women do not appear to become *marrngitmirri* they do
[791 practise as rainmakers. Some of the rainmakers of east
563] Arnhem Land, of whom there were three in Mildjingi clan—the clan of Wilindjango—were women, one of whom was renowned for her prowess with the rites and magical spells of the rainmaker. However, although rain-
● [788] making depends upon the understanding and correct observance of certain rituals and the use of the appropriate

* *With Plates I and J*

[p. 97 (B)]

magical rites and spells, it does not involve the co-operation of spirit familiars.

The majority of informants stated that the cult of the *marngit* is not a hereditary one, and they asserted that although the son of a *marngitmirri* father may also be *marngitmirri*, membership of the cult does not necessarily pass from father to son. But at least one informant of Wanguri clan, a clan of Mindjikai *barpuro*, declared that in his own clan, of which the principal territory is at Arnhem Bay, a little to the south and east of Elcho Island, the cult of the *marngit* was hereditary and did pass from father to son. On controversial issues of this kind, long discussions often took place among the old men who acted as informants, and finally they would reach agreement and give me their verdict. Far from being careless or merely anxious to please, they took great pains to check information by referring to people who possessed specialized knowledge, and took much trouble in settling any doubtful point. My informants declared that the *marngit* was also hereditary in the Burara tribe, where, however, the cult of the *ragalk* was also established and was certainly dominant. Some conflict, or difference of opinion, does occur in matters of this kind particularly in north-eastern Arnhem Land where there is no hard and fast, or orthodox, view, supported by a large body of opinion.

This means that, as might be expected, in the absence of a written language or an organized body to formalize belief, there is necessarily some degree of flexibility, some scope for individual ideas, and within the atypical, intensely segmentary, social organization of eastern Arnhem Land, this variability tends to be emphasized. Even in matters of kinship, which concerns the entire group, since it regulates all behaviour, differences sometimes occurred and the people would call in old men and submit an intricate or knotty problem to them in the way that I have mentioned above.

It was intended originally to confine this paper to a short account of the *marngitmirri*, translated from the statements of the medicinemen themselves, and to follow this with descriptions of the *marngit*, which are shown in the accompanying plates of actual drawings of their spirit familiars made by these medicinemen. But my attention has been drawn to an article by the late Revd. T. T. Webb published some years ago, 'The Making of a Marmgit,'[2] which contains some errors and misconceptions, and I have therefore extended the scope of this article to discuss the relationship of the medicineman and sorcerer in Arnhem Land and the roles and the distribution of these cults.

In the opening paragraph of this article Mr. Webb says: 'In east Arnhem Land there are two classes of magicians

[p.97(c)]